

## OUTDOOR RECREATION PROJECTS

### **Application Step Procedures** *Massachusetts Urban Self-Help Program* *Strategic Urban Recreation Fund*

1. Municipality (the “Participant”) requests an Outdoor Recreation Project Application Package from the Division of Conservation Services before purchasing land, for an acquisition project, or before construction begins, for a renovation or development project. Confirm deadline for applications. Information on the grant round is available online at [www.mass.gov/envir/dcs](http://www.mass.gov/envir/dcs).
2. Participant files one original and two copies of the complete application, clearly marking the original. No Electronic Filings Will Be Accepted. Projects involving renovations of the same theme in multiple parks, such as resurfacing playgrounds, may be packaged into one application. Unrelated renovations must be submitted as individual applications.
3. For Park Acquisition Projects: Participant submits draft warrant article or Council order to the Division for review before Town Meeting or City Council vote. Municipal counsel should be consulted in drafting the warrant article, order of taking, or city council order. The draft municipal vote must cite the particular parcel to be acquired and contain authorization to seek funding under M.G.L. Chapter 933 Acts of 1977, as amended and to enter into any contracts for the project, as well as permit the conveyance of a conservation restriction if a CR is applicable to the project.
4. Participant will be contacted by DCS to schedule a site inspection.
5. Merit point rating assigned by Division of Conservation Services followed by review by the Executive Office of Environmental Affairs Interagency Lands Committee, and the Office for Commonwealth Development. Interagency review is designed to identify statewide or regional interagency interests in projects and to review the point rating for the purpose of making final funding recommendations, with or without conditions, to the Secretary.
6. Application is reviewed and approved with or without special conditions, or rejected by the Secretary.
7. Project approval letter, Urban Self-Help Project Agreement, State Standard Contract, and billing forms for approved projects are sent to Participant by DCS. State funds are then obligated by the Commonwealth upon execution of contract documents for approved projects. Participants with unsuccessful applicants will receive an explanation of why the project was rejected and recommendations, if any, regarding resubmission.
8. Municipal Funding.
  - a. Municipality votes to appropriate, expend from available funds, or borrow an amount equal to the **total project cost** stated in the application. A municipality may vote to borrow funds in anticipation of state reimbursement prior to receiving agreement for reimbursement, but the borrowing cannot actually take place until final state approval has been received. Municipal vote for the total project cost may take place prior to Step 1 in the application process, but the municipality must ensure proper compliance with the Urban Self-Help application procedures. Approval may be withdrawn if municipality’s vote fails or if municipality exhibits lack of progress in obtaining this vote or in meeting time schedules established as part of approval conditions.
  - b. Exclusive of borrowing situations, and if the community wishes, reimbursements may be re-appropriated back into the participant’s Conservation Fund or dedicated fund. Said authorization may be voted in the original article or submitted in subsequent Town Meeting or City Council votes; otherwise, reimbursements must be deposited into the General Fund as per Massachusetts General Law. Communities utilizing accounts funded by the Cape Cod Land Bank Act, other local land bank acts, or the Community Preservation Act, should consult with the Department of Revenue, Division of Local Services for guidelines.

9. Participant files all required permits, final construction plans, and specifications for park development projects.
10. State Procurement Law: Acquisition projects must adhere to the state's procurement laws, M.G.L. Chapter 30B. Work with your municipal procurement officer to ensure that your project conforms to the procurement law that will include advertising in the Central Register 30 days prior to closing. State procurement law also prohibits EOEA from reimbursing for any costs, including design, incurred prior to the starting date on the state standard contract. Do not incur any costs for which you plan to submit a reimbursement request until you have a fully executed state standard contract.
11. Participant makes land purchase or begins park development *only* after having received an affirmative Town Meeting or City Council Vote, and an executed state standard contract from the Secretary of Environmental Affairs.
12. Participant files billing forms with the Division, along with required documentation. Partial payments may be requested. An Urban Self-Help acknowledgement sign must be in place at the main access point before final payment will be made.
13. Billing form, requests for reimbursements, and documents reviewed by the Division for any changes from the project application, completeness and accuracy. A corrective amendment to the project agreement will be executed and returned for signing and recording by the Participant if the project has changed. (A final inspection of the project is conducted prior to final payment.)
14. Report to Secretary by Director on billing and request for approval.
15. DCS prepares invoice and submits for payment to EOEA's fiscal staff.
16. Payment is made. Participant receives reimbursement, typically via electronic transfer.

Participants should review DCS Post Completion requirements regarding fees, user limitations, and prohibitions against converting the parkland to any other use or transfer of ownership.